



UPDATE

Montana Department of Commerce

29th Annual Governor's Conference Planning Underway

Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Promotion Division staff is busy lining up the speakers, session topics and entertainment for the 2003 Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism & Recreation. The 29th annual Montana conference will be held March 24-25, 2003 at the WestCoast Colonial Hotel in Helena. This is a Monday through Tuesday schedule with pre-conference activities taking place on Sunday, March 23.

The conference agenda will be finalized before the first of the year and registration notifications will be mailed by mid-January. Printed conference material, including a registration form, will be distributed by early February. For the latest information visit our Intranet site: www.travelmontana.state.mt.us. The site will be updated daily as conference material becomes available.

If you are interested in exhibiting or being a sponsor, contact Montana Department of Commerce, Travel Montana's Sarah Lawlor, 406-841-2870, e-mail: slawlor@state.mt.us.

PSA Campaign to Air Again

Montana Department of Commerce's Travel Montana program will once again air the "Tourism—Good for Montanans—Good for Montana" public service announcements on television and radio from January 1, 2003 through March 31, 2003. The campaign made its initial debut in May 2002

and ran through August 2002.

"We need to continue to get the word out to the people of Montana that the tourism industry is a vital component of our state's economy," said Betsy Baumgart, administrator for the Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Promotion Division.

The PSA campaign came in response to a 2000 resident attitude survey conducted by the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana (ITRR). The ITRR report showed that 74 percent of Montanans felt they had been exposed to "some" or "no" information on the economic benefits of tourism.

Kalispell and Malta Identify CTAP Grant Projects

Designing a performing arts center in Kalispell and building a visitor information center at the Phillips County Museum in Malta are two of the tourism infrastructure projects resulting from the 2001-2002 Community Tourism Assessment Program (CTAP). Kalispell and Malta completed the eight-month CTAP process in summer 2002. Each have applied for a \$10,000 tourism "bed tax" grant available to their community for completing the CTAP process administered by the Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Promotion Division with assistance from MSU Extension and UM's ITRR.

The Kalispell Chamber will use their CTAP grant to help pay for architectural services providing site review, center con-

cept, and design for a performing arts facility. The project is being led by the Glacier Performing Arts Center, Inc., which includes the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, Glacier Orchestra and Chorale, Flathead Valley Community College, city and county officials, and the Flathead Business and Industry Association.

The PhillCo Economic Growth Council, Inc. will use Malta's CTAP grant to remodel the Phillips County Museum by improving its exterior appearance and expanding the gift store area to accommodate more visitor information services. WEB-CAM images from area attractions, such as the Judith River Dinosaur Institute dinosaur dig sites, will be one of the museum's new features.

The CTAP process has involved 29 Montana communities since its creation in 1991. CTAP grants have invested \$376,000 tourism "bed tax" dollars into tourism-related projects in these communities.

Montana Goes to Hollywood

The National Tour Association (NTA) held its annual conference November 7-13 in Los Angeles. Group and Overseas Marketing Manager Pam Gosink and Group Travel Specialist Marlee Iverson met with over 75 group tour operators to promote Montana's sites, attractions and services.

"Montana Goes Hollywood" was the theme for Montana Night, which was held at Pinot Hollywood. In cooperation with Montana Department of Commerce, Travel Montana, more than 20 Montana tourism service suppliers hosted 40-plus tour operators at the educational/dinner event. Winner of this year's trip for two to Montana is Randy Case of AFC Tours, San Diego, CA. The contest is open to tour operators attending the NTA conference and is sup-

Did You Know?

- The Trail of Sitting Bull and Missouri River Country are featured in the November issue of *World and I* magazine.
- Montana River Ranch and Culbertson are featured in the Fall issue of *Persimmon Hill* magazine.
- Horizon Airlines will begin Saturday nonstop flights from Los Angeles to Bozeman on December 21, 2002.

Montana Department of Commerce, Promotion Division, Betsy Baumgart, Administrator
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ported by Montana suppliers, travel regions and Montana Department of Commerce, Travel Montana.

Leads from NTA will be posted on our Intranet site: www.travelmontana.state.mt.us under Group Travel, or for more information contact Marlee, 406-841-2895, e-mail: marlee@visitmt.com.

Film Office News

After shooting five feature films in Montana this past spring and summer, the production community is keeping busy this fall with television commercials. AT&T Wireless, Marlboro and Mackenzie River Pizza all shot commercials in Montana during September and October.

Visitor Information Centers Host Record Numbers

Summer 2002 was a good season for eight Montana Department of Commerce, Travel Montana-supported visitor information centers (VICs). Overall, visitation to the VICs was up 32.8 percent over last year's figures. Staff at the VICs track visitor numbers unscientifically by a variety of means. Most often, counts are tallied using the guest sign-in books.

During the months of May through September, 178,852 visitors used VIC facilities and took advantage of travel counselors' knowledge and personal attention. West Yellowstone saw the largest percentage increase in visitation with an impressive 71.2 percent

increase over the same period last year. Marysue Costello, executive director of the West Yellowstone Convention and Visitors Bureau, attributed the dramatic increase in guests, in part, to new building signs that clearly identify the facility as the Visitors Center.

Not far behind, Broadus recorded a 68 percent increase over last season. Staff credited the Bowling Tournament in Billings for their increased visitor traffic.

Moving On, Moving Up and Branching Out

Mary Boyle, Montana Department of Commerce, Travel Montana's Publicity Coordinator for the past four years, has accepted a position with Montana State Fund, the state's Workers Compensation Insurance Carrier, as the Communications and Public Relations Specialist. She will be assisting Matthew Cohn, who is the



Mary Boyle

Communications and Public Relations Leader. Mary will be greatly missed by Montana Department of Commerce, Travel Montana and Montana Film Office staff, and passes along her appreciation to all the folks she's worked with throughout Montana over the years.

Amy Robbins, former administrative assistant to Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Promotion Division's administrator, has taken over the duties of Industry Programs Specialist. Amy joined

the staff of Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Promotion Division in August of this year.

Group and Overseas Marketing Manager Pam Gosink has assumed administrative responsibilities for supervising Montana Department of Commerce, Travel Montana's marketing programs: International/Group Travel, Consumer Advertising, Publications, Publicity and Photography. In addition to her duties as group and overseas manager, Pam will help coordinate the duties of the various marketing managers' programs in order to assure a more comprehensive and unified approach to Montana Department of Commerce, Travel Montana's marketing campaigns.

Happy Holidays

In keeping with the spirit of the season, we would like to express our gratitude to our many partners who help strengthen our efforts to promote tourism and film in Montana.

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season from your friends at Travel Montana and the Montana Film Office.

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.

Calendar of Events

December

- 3-6 Western States Tourism Policy Council: Gateway Community Partnerships for Tourism & Conservation—Santa Ana Pueblo, NM
- 5 MTRI Lewis & Clark Focus Team Meeting—Helena

For all of the latest Montana tourism industry information log on to:
travelmontana.state.mt.us.



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Montana Department of Commerce

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